

BARD Basics

BARD: Braille and Audio Reading Download

What is BARD?

- ❑ BARD is a National Library Service (NLS) free download service.
- ❑ Over 25,000 books and over 45 magazine titles are available; books are added weekly.
- ❑ Any active individual Talking Book Program patron is eligible.
- ❑ Active institutional Talking Book Program account-holders may also be eligible.

How do I register?

Go to <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/TX1A/ApplicationInstructions.html> to apply for a BARD login. You must have active Talking Book Program service and an email address.

How do I get to the books and magazines?

Go to <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/TX1A> to browse and download books and magazines—you must have received your BARD login to access this site—or browse and link through the main NLS catalog. You will also need high-speed Internet access for downloading.

What machines will play the downloaded books and magazines?

You cannot play downloaded BARD materials on your computer; you must use an authorized player.

- ❑ If you have received your NLS Digital Talking Book Machine (DTBM), either the Standard or the Advanced model, you can play BARD downloads on it.
- ❑ There are also several commercial machines that are able to play BARD downloads. More may be added as time goes on. We do not sell or loan these but can provide contact information upon request. They are:

APH Book Port Plus

APH Braille Plus Mobile Manager

Apex BrailleNote/VoiceNote

HIMS BookSense

HIMS BookSense DS

HIMS BookSense XT

HIMS Sense Notetaker

Humanware Victor Reader Stratus

Humanware Victor Reader Stream

LevelStar Icon

Milestone 212

Milestone 312

PLEXTALK PTN2

PLEXTALK Pocket PTP1

What do I use to store the book or magazine?

Depending on which machine you are using, you may store the book or magazine on a digital cartridge, flash drive, or other storage device (e.g., flash card). If using the NLS machine, then use Option 1 or Option 2 (below). If using a commercial machine, check the documentation to see which option is best. We do not supply any of these storage media; you will need to purchase them.

Option 1: NLS-type digital cartridge. Available for purchase from participating vendors. Contact information is provided upon request. You will need a cable to connect the cartridge to your computer during the download/transfer process.

Option 2: Standard USB flash drive (also called thumb drive, jump drive). Available at most large retail stores or electronics stores. Some flash drives work better than others with this player; contact us or see our website for more information.

Can I store more than one book on the same (cartridge, flash drive, other device)?

Yes, but if you are using the NLS DTBM to play your downloads and you received your machine before about mid-September 2009 you must have a software update in order to use the Bookshelf feature to move between books. You can obtain the latest update at <http://www.loc.gov/nls/DTBM/>. If you have this update, you can access the Bookshelf feature on your DTBM by pressing and holding the Play/Stop key until it says "Bookshelf," then using the FF and RW keys to move forward and backward between titles. When you reach the title you want, press Play. For commercial machines, check your machine's documentation.

How many books will fit on one (cartridge, flash drive, other storage device)?

It depends on the size of the cartridge, flash drive, or other device and the size of the books. Almost any NLS book will be smaller than 256 MB, so you should be able to fit several titles on a 1 GB or 2 GB flash drive or cartridge (1000 MB = 1 GB). A 1 GB cartridge will hold about 92 hours of narration.

Does downloading books or magazines from BARD require computer expertise?

Yes, downloading from BARD does require some basic computer skills, including navigating the Web, filling out online forms, and downloading, unzipping, and transferring files. If you have experience with these processes, or have assistance from someone who does, downloading from BARD is not difficult. However, the specific step-by-step sequence varies somewhat based on which machine you are using to play your downloads as well as the operating system, software, and settings of your computer, as well as any screen readers or other assistive technologies you may be using. You may find that you need local assistance familiar with your particular set-up for some of these processes.

Where can I get help?

- ❑ BARD-specific questions may be answered by the BARD online instructions and FAQs at <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/TX1A/support.html>.
- ❑ If not, you may contact the Texas Talking Book Program with BARD-specific questions at tbp.bard@tsl.state.tx.us or at 1-800-252-9605 (512-463-5458 if you live in Austin).
- ❑ Machine-specific questions may be answered by your machine's user guide or other documentation, or information provided on the manufacturer's website.
- ❑ If not, you may contact the machine's manufacturer (contact the Texas Talking Book Program with questions about the NLS DTBM).
- ❑ You may use your usual local technical supports (friend or family member, or other knowledgeable sources).